

Rationale

At Birchwood Nursery School we believe good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. At a young age continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. Also we believe regular attendance at nursery can set good practice for statutory school.

Aims

To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normal' and valued

To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive

To be consistent in implementation of our policy and procedures

Regular attendance and punctuality are important because:-

Regular attendance and punctuality help to instil good habits for the future and promote the development of a positive attitude towards school.

Poor attendance and punctuality may result in a child finding it difficult to settle, to become involved and to form social relationships

Absence and lateness affects children's ability to participate and benefit from the curriculum.

Children who arrive late disrupt the routine of the classroom and the work/progress of others.

Strategies for Promoting Regular Attendance and Punctuality

The importance of regular attendance and punctuality is communicated to parents through:-

Induction meetings with the Headteacher where parents are made aware of the importance of regular attendance prior to entry and of the importance of collecting children on time.

Discussions with child's Key Person, informally and formally during Parent Dialogues and meetings.

Information is shared in newsletters.

Individual attendance letters are sent to parents informing them if their child's absence is a cause for concern.

Times of sessions are made clear to parents and staff and these are followed consistently. Children arriving after the start of the session are recorded as 'late' and may have to wait in Nursery with their parent/carer until the end of the small group session before entering the classroom.

Staff constantly work to create an environment in which children and parents feel welcome, thus promoting regular attendance.

Children with good attendance are recognised each half term with the presentation of either a 100% attendance certificate or >95% attendance certificate.

Procedures for following up absence

Staff note all absences, by using the appropriate symbol in the register.

First day response procedures are followed for any child we are concerned about and whose parents have not already contacted the school. A staff member will telephone the parents/carers to enquire the reasons for the absence. If the child is known to Social Care they will be informed of the unauthorised absence. In the event that no answer can be obtained by telephone, a text message/email will also be sent.

On return to school, parents of any child for whom we have not received a reason for absence will receive a letter requesting provision of a reason for unexplained absences.

If, after one week, there has been no contact the school will send a letter to the family and make further enquiries with relatives, other contacts on the admissions form or siblings schools.

All notes from parents regarding a child's absence are stored in the class registers.

If a child is persistently late or absent the key person or Headteacher/Manager will contact the parents/carers and invite them into school to discuss the issues and find ways forward. Persistent absences could result in a place at the Nursery being withdrawn if moves are not taken to increase the attendance.

If after one month there has been no contact the child's name will be removed from the register and the place allocated to another child on the waiting list.

Responsibilities of Birchwood

Completion of attendance registers at the beginning of each school session.

Differentiation in the registers between absence for medical reasons, holidays, authorised absences, unauthorised absences and children who have arrived late.

Staff actively discourage lateness and children arriving after the session starts (once the main door to the 2 buildings has close) will be marked as 'late' and parents are asked to sign the 'late register' and explain the reason for the lateness

Key persons monitor their key children's attendance and punctuality. Absence reports are given to key persons each half term and these are discussed regularly with parents. Staff inform the Headteacher if they have concerns.

The school collates and monitors attendance information for all children each half term in line with safeguarding good practice.

Poor attendance and punctuality will be followed up by the Headteacher

Responsibilities of the parents

Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, correctly dressed and ready to learn.

Work with the nursery to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance.

Notify the school by telephone or email if their child is absent, on the first day of absence and on any subsequent days.

Try to avoid medical or dental appointments during school hours.

Try to avoid taking holidays during term time

Reviewed: February 2019

Next review: February 2022